BULL. BOT. SURV. INDIA
Vol. 6, No. 1 : p. 95, 1964

A NOTE ON *SOLANUM ACULEATISSIMUM* JACQ.*

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During the botanical exploration of South Kanara district, Mysore State, a rare species of *Solanum* was collected from the North Someshwar evergreen forest, Sitanadi, and identified as *Solanum aculeatissimum* Jacq. A reference to literature indicated that this plant, a native of tropical America which has extensively naturalized in other tropical regions like Malaya Peninsula, Java, Sumatra and tropical Africa, has been reported in India only from Quilon by Gamble. A small descriptive note for this little known plant is presented here.

Solanum aculeatissimum Jacq. Coll. 1:100, 1787; Dunal in DC. Prodr. 13(1):244, 1852; Clarke in Hook. f. Fl. Brit. Ind. 4: 237, 1883; Prain in J. Asiat. Soc. Beng. 74:335, 1906; Gamble, Fl. Pres. Madras 939, 1923. *S. ciliatum* Lam. Ill. 2:21, 1793. *S. myricanthum* Dunal, Hist. Solanac. 218, t. 19, 1813.

An undershrub about 75 cm tall, bearing straight or somewhat downward pointing spines on all its parts; young parts more bristly. *Leaves* broadly ovate, sometimes cordate at the base, up to 12 cm long, 9 cm wide, membranous, irregularly lobed, with adpressed hairs above, usually glabrous below, armed on the petiole and main nerves with straight, deflexed or upward pointing sharp prickles; petiole stout up to 6 cm long. *Flowers* in extra-axillary, few-flowered cymes. *Calyx* prickly, campanulate, 5-lobed, lobes 4 mm long, 2 mm wide, persistent. *Corolla* white, 5-lobed, lobes ovate to ovate lanceolate, 10 mm long, 5 mm wide with a prominent midrib. *Stamens* 5; filaments short, 3 - 5 mm long, free; anther subsessile, lanceolate, 5 mm long, 2 mm wide. *Style* 4 mm long. *Berry* globose, up to 2.5 cm in diameter, orange red when ripe, with small compressed reniform seeds (Plate I).

Sitanadi, *R. K. Arora*, 2760, 19-11-1962.

The plant grows on variable type of habitat from sea shores, extending to the open rain forests up to an elevation of 600 m.

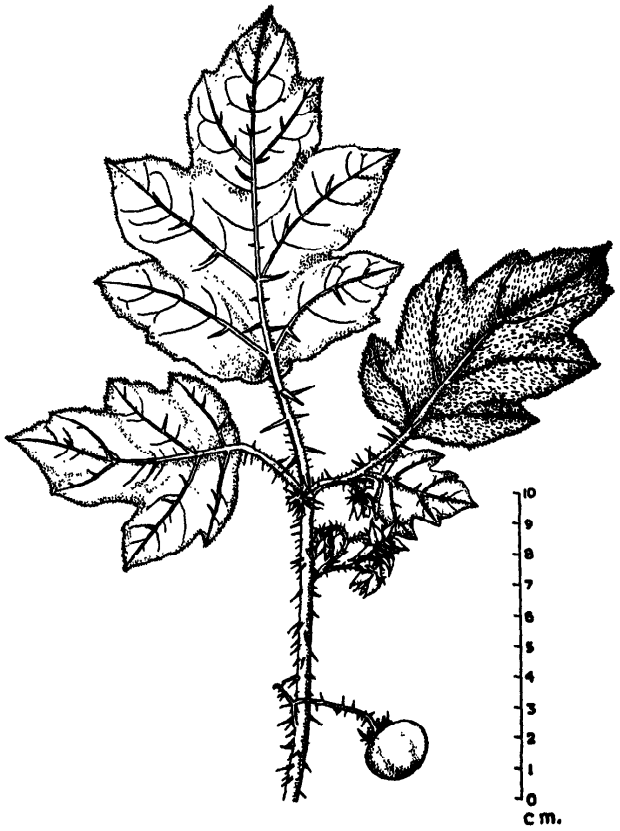

PLATE I : A flowering branch with berry.

* Since writing this note, the species has been reported by Bezbaruah from Assam. [*J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 60(3) : 759-761, 1963.]